

# 2015 APAAC ANNUAL VICTIM ADVOCATE CONFERENCE

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## Advanced Domestic Violence Advocacy

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Advanced domestic  
Violence Advocacy

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## ADVANCED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Angela Rose, Scottsdale Prosecutor's Office  
Colleen Phelan, Pima County Attorney's  
Office

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## Agenda

- Strangulation
- Lethality
- Reluctant Victims

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## Domestic Violence- Today's Focus

- Intimate Partner focus

- Not ARS definition



- Disclaimer on use of gender

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## STRANGULATION

Verb: a form of asphyxia (lack of oxygen) characterized by closure of the blood vessels and or air passages of the neck as a result of external pressure on the neck.

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## Video

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## Strangulation

- 'Choking'
- Lethality
  - Medical reality of non-fatal strangulation
  - Risk factor in overall lethality assessment



**Victims of prior strangulation  
are 7 times more likely  
to become a victim of homicide.**

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## Signs and Symptoms

### Signs:

- Redness of neck
- Scratch marks
- Finger tip bruises
- Tiny red spots (petechiae)
- Blood red eyes (capillary rupture)
- Swelling of neck

### Symptoms:

- Voice changes or loss of voice
- Difficulty breathing and swallowing
- Coughing or vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Involuntary urination/defecation

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## What Advocates Need to Know

- Significant impact of strangulation
  - Physical
  - Psychological

- Medical Follow-up

- Resources
  - Brochure with Symptom's Log




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## Scenario- Group Activity

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## LETHALITY

Noun: of, relating to, or causing death; deadly; fatal

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## Why Lethality Assessments?

1,500 DV fatalities a year in the U.S.

- Police previously on scene in **50%** of DV homicides
- Only **4 %** of DV homicide victims utilized DV services prior
- Re-assault dropped by **60%** when victims went into shelter

1976: 1,587 women + 1,304 men= 2,891  
2005: 1,181 women + 329 men= 1,510

48% reduction overall  
75% reduction for men

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## Lethality Assessment Plan (LAP)

- Dr. Jacquelyn C. Campbell's research
  - Danger Assessment
    - [www.dangerassessment.org](http://www.dangerassessment.org)
  - Greater awareness of danger and lethality
  - Increased knowledge of resources



Allows victims to see through  
'different lens'.

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## Elements of Lethality

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|--|---|
| • Threats of death                     | • Jealous or controlling daily activities |
| • Access to weapons                    | • Threats of suicide from abuser          |
| • Child from a different mother/father | • Recent attempts to leave                |
| • Unemployed                           | • Monitoring of phone/email/texts         |
| • 'Choking'                            | • Abuse of drugs/alcohol                  |
| • Intimidating behavior                | • Forced sex                              |
| • Belief s/he might try to kill them   |   |
| • Escalating violence                  |   |

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## Lethality Conversation Reminders

1. Gather information
2. Build rapport
3. Reinforce victim's potential danger
4. Educate and safety plan
5. Encourage victim explore resources

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### Lethality- What to say

- I'm concerned for your safety.
- Based on x and y I am worried that you might be killed.
- In situations similar to yours, people have been killed.

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### Scenario- Group Activity

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### RELUCTANT VICTIMS

Noun: a victim of domestic violence who does not want to participate in the process and/or actively pursues charges being dropped.

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# Scenario- Group Activity

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- ## Reluctant Victims
- Recantation
    - Preliminary Hearings
    - Prior Statements
  - Returning to live with abuser
    - Safety concerns
  - Refusal to testify

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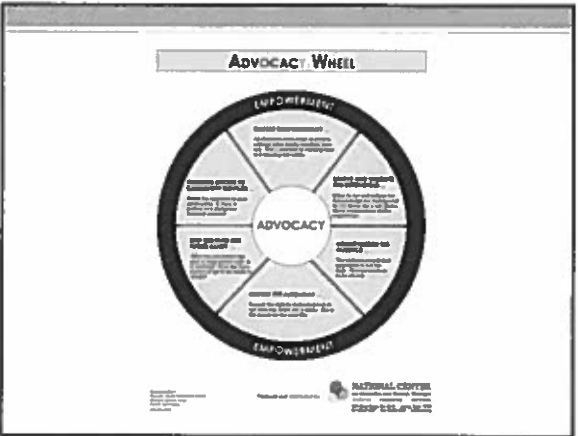
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Remember...

**She is the expert in  
her situation.**

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